

Island Reach project Funding Proposal

The Island Reach project is a vision to send a suitable vessel to provide much needed medical services to the peoples of Madagascar.

Task summary

- Purchase and register a suitable vessel – **Completed**
- Overhaul mechanical systems and upgrade vessel's equipment for the Ocean voyage – **Plans agreed, units ordered**
- Complete renovation of holds to medical units, add medical staff accommodation – **Not started**
- Deliver vessel from Conwy, Wales to Madagascar – **Volunteer, experienced crews recruited**
- Finish off installation of medical area onboard – **To be completed on arrival Madagascar**
- Train future crews to operate vessel around Madagascar – **In hand**
- Re-register vessel in Madagascar as a medical relief vessel – **Talks started with authorities**
- Serve remote settlements around Madagascar – **As detailed below**

About Madagascar

Madagascar is situated in the Indian Ocean, 250 miles off Mozambique, and is the fourth biggest island in the world. It has a population of around 27.6 million, mostly living around the coast, as the interior is dominated by a large rain forest. Its climate varies dramatically from temperate in north to very dry in south; very wet in east (affected greatly by the seasonal Indian Ocean monsoons) to cooler and less humid in the more mountainous centre where the capital, Antananarivo is.

Madagascar is poor but striving to improve. In 2000, Madagascar embarked on the preparation of a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative. The boards of the IMF and of the World Bank concurred in December 2000 that the country was eligible under the HIPC Initiative, and Madagascar reached the decision point for debt relief. For comparison, the average monthly wage is equivalent to \$34 USD.

Our partners on the ground, Mercy Ministries Madagascar (a registered NGO in Madagascar, and part of the YWAM family of ministries) has been operating in Madagascar since 2004, providing free primary health care. They regularly transport medical professionals along extremely rutted and worn dirt roads to settlements. They have mainly been supported by the Mercy Ministries International team based at the YWAM Burtigny campus in Switzerland.



Overview of Mercy Ministries work in Madagascar



YWAM Mercy Ministries have been serving remote villages and isolated populations of Madagascar with community healthcare, nutrition and education since 2004.

They aim to support and encourage the development of disadvantaged communities by providing appropriate humanitarian assistance to the poor, destitute and needy without distinction of gender, race or religion

Their community healthcare program aims to improve health in rural areas that are far from government hospitals (1 or 2 days walking in the forest). To date, they have installed 50 village clinics, providing access to vital healthcare for a population of approximately 200,000 people in the Antsinanana and Analanjirofo regions, on the east coast of Madagascar.

This project has received the appreciation of the Malagasy government who are now facilitating all administrative process and clearances for our teams to work closely with the governmental health authorities.

"Imagine being sick, shivering with high fever and headache, and having to walk for one day through the forest to find a hospital, that was the nightmare we were going through before; especially for pregnant women. But now we don't have to go far to receive medical care. We are so thankful to God for the village clinic that Mercy Ministries has brought to our village"

Rakotonirina Villager from Ampasimbe – Madagascar



Mercy Ministries Madagascar currently reaches out to 200 villages along the east coast of Madagascar and inland, but there are many more villages that are only accessible by boat because of the non-existent or very bad road system and many populations live by the coast. This is where the need for a medical ship is very key.

Their ability to help the neediest and neglected in those villages would be multiplied by having a medical ship which could carry enough supplies and teams, especially significant would be a ship with a fully equipped dental unit.



In Madagascar, there are around 1,000 dentists for more than 26 million inhabitants. One dentist for 26,000 people!

In the most remote places of the Island, there is one dentist for 150,000 people. 80% of adults have never been to a dentist, yet dental problems, if left untreated, can lead to or aggravate other diseases such as throat infection, lung and even heart problems.

Partnership Opportunities

In joining hands with YWAM Ships Switzerland and the YWAM Marine Academy they will prepare and welcome *m/v Island Reach* into Madagascar. This will be a real game changer as hundreds of villagers every month will be able to access much needed dental care and have general consultations, their limited capacities will be greatly extended to help more people.



The ship will be such a great tool that will help us go beyond the existing limits of transport and equipment so we can reach and serve several more thousand Malagasy people.

YWAM Ships Switzerland



YWAMShips Switzerland (www.ywamships.ch) was formed recently, at YWAM Burtigny, specifically to develop vessels to reach the French speaking islands in the Indian Ocean, South Pacific, and Caribbean. When the opportunity came to purchase the ex-naval tender *SD Melton* from Vine Trust (who already operate three sister ships as medical relief vessels) YWAM Ships Switzerland agreed to purchase and have her converted to a suitable

vessel for Madagascar.

Linking in with the YWAM Ships network in the UK, a team of experienced volunteers came together to prepare *SD Melton* for the sea. After re-registering her as *m/v Island Reach*. They delivered her to the free winter berth in Conwy harbour, Wales for mechanical overhauling in December 2021.

Initially the plan was to overhaul her in Conwy, in preparation for the 8,000-mile delivery voyage to Madagascar, there to convert her holds to medical clinics, and add accommodation over the two redundant cargo hatches, for eight medical staff. The new accommodation is necessary as there will be a permanent crew of 6 and the remaining cabins are needed for the medical teams.

However, as support for the project grew in Wales for the project, it was decided to carry out the conversion in North Wales, with an enthusiastic, and marine experienced group of volunteers.

Measurements were taken and new drawings prepared to allow quotes to be obtained for conversion material, and the labour necessary. It was decided to convert the larger aft hold into roughly four sections:



1. A fully equipped dental suit (aft port)
2. A fully equipped doctor's consultation area (forward port)
3. A well-stocked pharmacy and dispensing area (aft stbd – under stairs)
4. An area for meeting patients, taking particulars and for medication collection (forward stbd)

Additionally, an added watertight (when secured) door would give access to the forward, smaller hold, which would be converted into

5. An eye examination and surgical unit

On deck, the existing hatches will be removed, plated over and extra medical staff accommodation built over them, extending, and joining onto, the existing crew accommodation. This will consist of four cabins (two bunks in each) with washing facilities. An extra toilet and shower will also be added to the existing two crew toilets and shower, with another toilet, accessed from the deck, being recommissioned for visiting patients.

To reduce cost and simplify the process, the new accommodation will be built ashore in modular form, in a suitable factory in Liverpool, then craned into the prepared deck and welded into place. Outfitting of the cabins will then commence.

Delivery voyage

This new extra accommodation will allow for more crew for the long voyage, rather than the six the vessel will need to operate her in the rivers and canal around Madagascar. 14 bunks in total will be available and the plan is to have around 12 crew for the delivery voyage, most of which are already recruited.

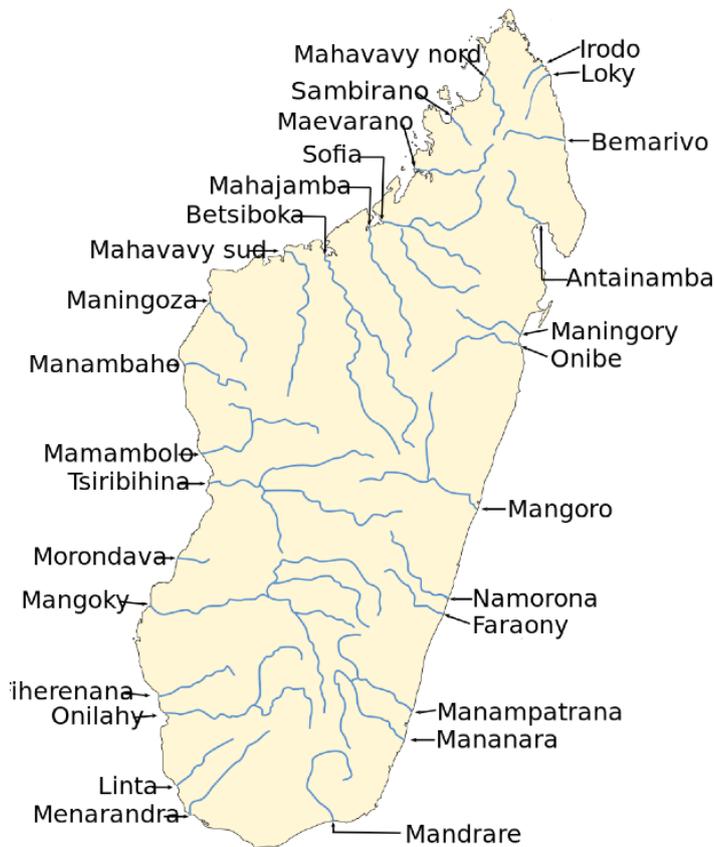
It is hoped the vessel will be ready for departure from Conwy by the beginning of June 2022. The delivery voyage down into and through the Mediterranean, through Suez and the Red Sea, then south in the Indian Ocean to Madagascar – taking about six weeks.

Final conversion in Madagascar

The final stage of the conversion will have to be finished in Madagascar (a suitable shipyard has been located), due to the need for the forward hold to store a large fuel bladder for the long delivery voyage. However, electrics and plumbing will be completed in Conwy before departure

Conversion drawings are included in Annex 4 of this proposal and CAD drawings are being prepared.





Operating a medical vessel around Madagascar

Madagascar has many rivers, as can be seen in the map, along which are numerous settlements. However, our research has revealed that many of the rivers are blocked with sand bars.

We are seeking more local knowledge about river access, preparing m/v Island Reach to operate from anchorages off settlements, and developing a partnership with Hover Aid to transport patients to the medical facilities onboard.

As we research marine operations around the island of Madagascar and set in place both the immediate crew to pioneer the ministry and the training of future crews, it is clear extra facilities will have to be added to the vessel. Some of these and the extra costs are below:

1. A good sized, powerful tender for the vessel, to be stowed in a prepared area aft of the funnel, with a davit to load and unload the tender. This tender will be needed to transport patients from coastal and river settlements, while the vessel is at anchor.
Estimated costs – £4,500
2. It is hoped that Hover Aid can assist us in transporting patients from locations we cannot reach via the vessel's tender. However, either way, suitable means of safe access for patients from the tender or hovercraft needs to be made. This will probably mean purchase of an aluminium accommodation and pontoon, and/or construction of a transom off the rear of the vessel.
Estimated costs – £1,500
3. Suitable satellite communications will be required to upgrade the vessel's present communications suit; however, this will also be needed for communications around Madagascar where cell coverage is limited.
Estimated costs – £1,600, plus annual fee £70 (depending on contract)

For detailed costs for each stage of the project, please see Annex 3 and www.ywamships.ch



Longevity of the project and estimated reach

After inspection of the vessel pre-purchase, she was found to be very solidly built, in good overall condition and it is considered that she has a further 25 years of service in her.

An estimate of the vessels running costs (not including medical supplies which we hope to have donated) will be £70,000 GBP (\$93,800 USD) at todays costs. Assuming we can maintain the YWAM practice of volunteer crews and medical staff.

Looking at the number of patients already served annually by Mercy Ministries Madagascar and those that Vine Trust are able to serve with sister ships to the Island Reach, it is estimated conservatively that we should be able to freely serve 200,000 patients per year.

Donation Information

UK Donations

Account holder: Youth With A Mission, **please indicate Island Reach project**

Bank Address: NatWest plc, 16 The Boulevard, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 1XU

Sort code 60-06-20

Account number 56972989

IBAN: GB52 NWBK 6006 2056 972 989

BIC: NWBKGB21

GIFT AID forms are available for UK tax payers, contact info@ywamships.ch to request a form.

USA Donations

For payments from the USA using WISE, **please indicate Island Reach project**

Account holder: Youth With a Mission Limited

Routing number: 084009519

Account number: 9600000000453382

Account type: checking

WISE's address: 19 W 24th Street, New York, NY 10010, United States

Annexes Included:

TAX DEDUCTABLE receipts available for USA citizens for donations over \$1000

Annex 1	Summary of Anchorages around Madagascar
Annex 2	History and Vision of YWAM Ships Switzerland
Annex 3	Detailed financial requirements for Island Reach
Annex 4	Conversion Drawings

